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Thus, Mr. Editor, you have, here exhibited, upwards of twenty names and variations of names, all characteristic of that little emblem of activity, the ant, not only as an instance of the copiousness of the Welsh, but also as preserving the parent words illustrative of its appellations in other languages both ancient and modern.

Jan. 8th, 1821.

GEIRION.

WELSH MUSIC.—No. X.

To the EDITOR of the CAMBRO-BRITON.

SIR,—I shall now notice the remainder of the airs contained in the old book, which I named in my last.

“Farewell Abel Solomon” and “Moses Solomon.”—The names of these airs bear nothing analogous to Wales; yet the melodies are truly Welsh, particularly the first, which is a most elegant and beautiful composition, commencing in the *minor* key of A, then changing (like *Morfa Rhuddlan*) to the relative *major* and finishing in the *minor*. This tune is particularly well adapted to mournful songs. “Moses Solomon” is an energetic air, but too extended in its compass for any voice; yet the Pennillion-singers would contrive to follow the harp, sustaining notes, and chaunting on the 5th of the key, while the harper pursued, *ad libitum*, his varied path.

“Burstoy.”—Here I am again at a loss for a definition of the name of this tune; most likely it belonged, originally, to some house. The air is in 3-4 time, and in the style of *Lwyn Onn*, but by no means so agreeable, nor so well calculated for singing.

“Triban,” or *the Triplet*.—It is rather a paradox to call a tune, written in common time, or four crotchets in a bar,—a Triplet;—but so it is here. The character of this air is majestic—and not tripping—something in the style of “Sweet Richard*.”

“Sawdl y Fwch.”—*The Cow’s Heel*.—Jones gives this tune quite differently in his collection; in fact, there is scarcely any similarity between them, and the only way I can account for it is, that the cows were of a different breed! I give the preference, however, to Mr. Jones’s edition.

* See No. 16 of the CAMBRO-BRITON, p. 170, for Mr. Parry’s description of this air—ED.

“ Breuddwyd Davydd Rhys,”—*Davydd Rhys's Dream*.—This is a most delightful dream, (not inferior to Moore's “ Love's young Dream,”) and extremely well adapted to an amorous ditty.

“ Rogero.”—I am once more at fault. Who master Rogero was I cannot imagine; I can only find one of that name in W. O. Pughe's *Cambrian Biography*, namely, “Syr Roger Ofeiriad, a Poet and Divine, who flourished between 1560 and 1600.” The melody is not much known, I believe; nor does it partake much of our characteristic simplicity.

I remain, Sir, your obedient Servant,

Newman Street, Jan. 15th, 1821.

JOHN PARRY.

MABINOGION.

FREQUENT allusions have been made in the course of this work to the MABINOGION, or Juvenile Romances, which are, unquestionably, among the most curious, as well as the most ancient, remains of Welsh Literature. The origin of fictitious history has, of late years, undergone much able discussion;* and it has been satisfactorily ascertained, that this species of writing had its origin in a state of society long antecedent to that, in which the chastening influence of civilization had its natural effect on the operations of the human intellect. Romantic fiction, indeed, to speak more accurately, had its source in the heart, and was rather the offspring of natural feeling than of studied reflection. Hence, in the most remote ages, and in countries most widely dissevered, these sportive sallies of feeling and imagination have been found to prevail. But it was, chiefly, among the solitudes of hills, dells, and forests that the Genius of Romance found her most congenial abode: here it was she conjured, around her, her brilliant visions, and peopled the neighbouring wilds with a thousand fantastic creations. The woods of America†, the Scottish highlands, and the mountains of Wales have alike borne testimony to the truth of this observation.‡

* In this respect Mr. Dunlop's work holds, perhaps, the first rank: there is also a very interesting article on the subject in the 41st Number of the *Quarterly Review*.

† The national tales of Peru, which form the foundation of Vega's work, are well known.

‡ This species of fiction was, indeed, common to the Celtic nations; and from whom, it has been supposed, the romances of the middle ages were ori-

In most countries, however, the Goddess of Fiction wore, in her infancy, the garb of the Muses: in Wales alone she seems to have assumed a more sober attire. But it has before been remarked, that in this respect the early literature of the Cymry differs, apparently, from that of all other nations*: their poetry is history, and their prose is romance†. None of the writers, by whom the subject of romantic fiction has been discussed, have been aware of this peculiarity; and few, if any, have known of the existence of those ancient tales, which have descended to us under the title prefixed to this article, although in antiquity, as well as in the characteristic merit of this species of composition, they may vie with most others, that have acquired so well merited a celebrity.

In the thirteenth Number of the CAMBRO-BRITON a short but interesting account of these tales, by Mr. Owen Pughe, was extracted from Mr. Gunn's edition of Nennius, and to which it is only necessary to add here, that they exist, for the most part, in MSS. of ancient date, and some have been traditionally retained in the memory of the oldest inhabitants. The subsequent tale is translated from the Red Book of Hergest, in Jesus College, Oxford, where several more of these interesting remains are preserved. Mr. Owen Pughe, as intimated on a former occasion, is preparing for the press a complete edition of the MABINOGION with illustratory remarks: and in the mean time the following specimen is offered, because, as having already appeared in the Cambrian Register‡, it cannot be considered to interfere with Mr. Pughe's patriotic design. In the translation here given, however, will be found an occasional variance of diction from that previously published.

* *

ginally derived. A Cornish tale of this description is preserved in the *Archæologia Britannica*.

* See CAMBRO-BRITON, vol. i. p. 216.

† The word *Romance*, as is well known, is derived from the language of that name, which was formed, on the overthrow of the Roman empire, by a union of the Latin with the Teutonic dialects of the Goths and Franks. True, as well as fictitious, history was originally written in the *Romance* tongue, but, in process of time, the latter only. The *Romance* was the parent of the Italian, French, and Spanish tongues, and was the language, in which the famous songs of the Troubadours were written. On this account, perhaps, it happened, that, for some time afterwards, every poem was called a *Romance*. The language has become extinct about seven centuries; and, with the exception of the songs of the Troubadours, there are scarcely any remains of it.

‡ Vol. i. p. 177.—The scarcity of this volume may be received as a sufficient apology for occasionally reprinting some of the articles it comprises.